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Cultural Heritage in Asia Series (Volume 1)

Tulou and the Hakka People



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Chapter 1

A Short History of Hakka People and Tulou

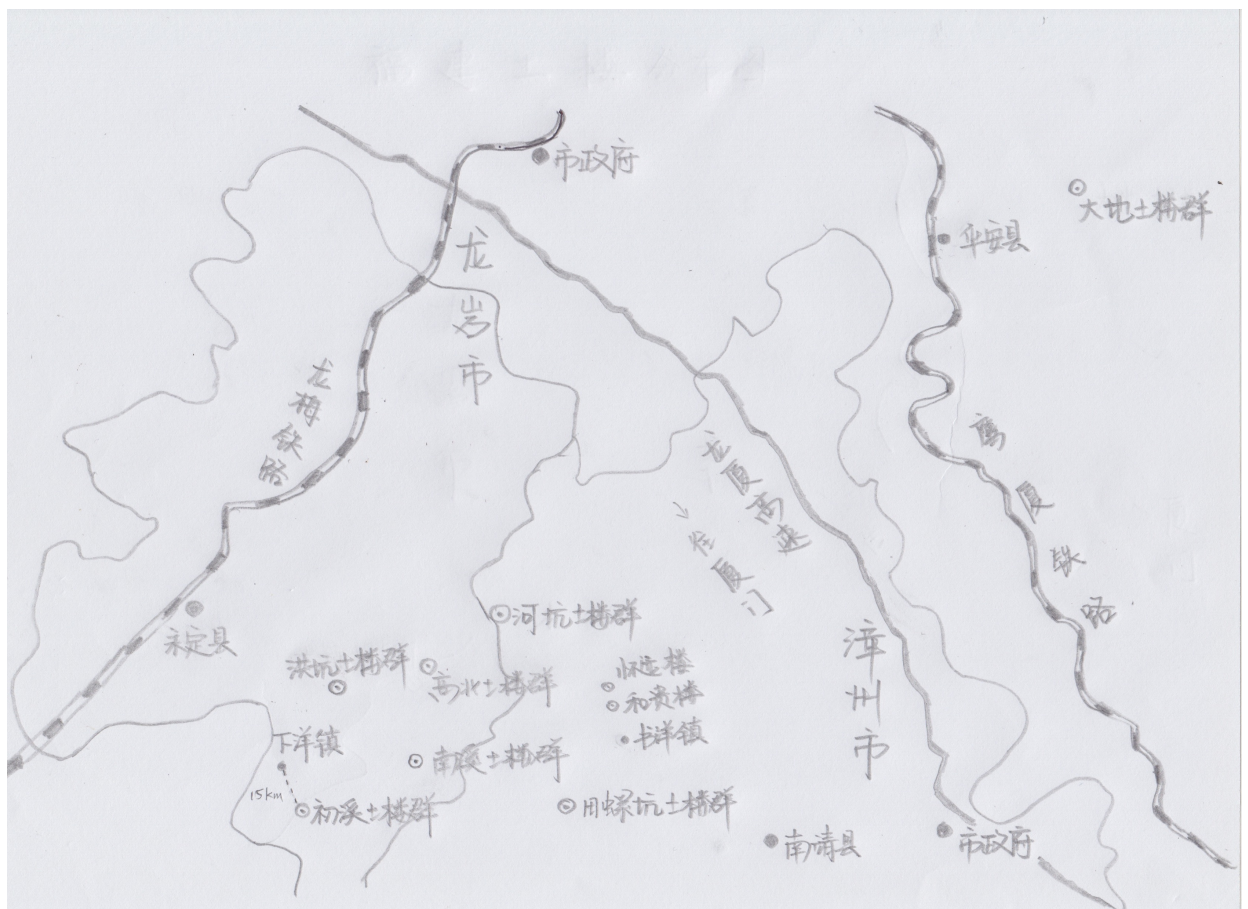
Hakka (客家) people are Han Chinese who speak Hakka language and are descendants of migrants from the Central Plain¹. The Chinese character of Hakka literally means “guest families”, which indicates their history of migration and the status of guest-like inhabitants in the residing places. Centuries ago Hakka ancestors started to move out of the Central Plain to escape social unrest and upheaval. They moved southward and after waves of migration eventually settled down primarily in the provinces of *Guangdong* (广东), *Fujian* (福建), *Jiangxi* (江西) and *Guangxi* (广西). The history of their migration could be traced back to the Qin dynasty (221-207BC) and continued into the Tang Dynasty, the Northern Song Dynasty and the Yuan Dynasty. During the Qing Dynasty, the central regime encouraged them to move to coastal areas where they populated the desolate interior and mountainous regions. These early settlers were aided with money and other resources to settle down. According to scholars of Hakka Studies, these Hakka speaking Han people moved from the North and merged with those in the South, and they formed the Hakka people of today. They spoke the Hakka language and developed a clear Hakka identity. Nowadays, Hakka people could be found in *Fujian*, *Guangdong*, *Guangxi* and *Jiangxi* provinces in Mainland China as well as in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast countries such as Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Tulou is a distinctive type of rural dwellings designed and constructed by Hakka and *minnan* (闽南) people between the 12th and 20th. Today, majority of tulou were located in Southwest Fujian province while a small number could be found in *Meizhou* (梅州), *Guangdong* province and *Jiangxi* province. In *Fujian* province, tulou

¹ Largely correspond to the current *Shanxi*, *Shandong* *Henan* provinces

scattered in the three counties of *Huaan* (华安), *Yongding* (永定) and *Nanjing* (南靖). *Yongding* and *Nanjing* counties were homes to the most well-known Tulou clusters. These are the *Gaobei* Tulou cluster (高北土楼群), *Hongkeng* Tulou cluster (洪坑土楼群), *Nanxi* Tulou cluster (南溪土楼群), *Chuxi* Tulou cluster (初溪土楼群), *Taxia* Tulou cluster (塔下土楼群) and *Tianluokeng* Tulou cluster (田螺坑土楼群). There were also a substantial number of independent Tulou buildings scattered in the mountainous areas of *Yongding* and *Nanjing* counties. It is estimated that *Yongding* has more than 20,000 tulou buildings. These grand circular or square Hakka tulou buildings surrounded by green tea terraces and lush trees created a picturesque scene in *Fujian*.

Map 1: The Location of Tulou Clusters



Tulou as fortified buildings has a long history. Its history could be traced back to the Tang Dynasty, corresponding with the migration of Hakka people from the Central Plain to the South. In *Yongding*, the oldest tulou building, *Longanzhai* (龙安寨) was built in the Tang Dynasty and more than 8000 tulou buildings were built before the Qing Dynasty (Luo, 2010). The original function of tulou was to serve as a fortress to fend off wild animals and bandits. Culturally, it is an exceptional architectural example that realized the idea of communal living. Most tulou are enclosed 3 – 4 storey buildings in circular, square or rectangular shape with only one main entrance, although some has two or three doors. One example is the *Chengqilou*(承启楼). As a fortress, all gates would be closed at night and late returners needed to answer with password to get into the building. The exterior of the first and second floors are earthen walls without windows for defense purposes. Some tulou buildings constructed backdoors that were connected to the hidden corridors. Other defensive facilities included special funnels and secret underground passageway (Yip, 2007).

Photo 1: A Stone Depicts *Yongding* Tulou



Tulou could be regarded as a lineage building as each tulou was built and resided by members of one lineage group. As ancestor worship occupied central position in the lineage life, a magnificent ancestral hall was built in the central open courtyard of each tulou. Significant ceremonies such as wedding and funeral were held in the central hall. It was also a place to negotiate and announce important lineage issues.

Below is a table showing tulou and their corresponding lineages

Table 1: Lineage and Tulou

Lineage	Migrated from	Tulou
Jian 简	Hebei 河北	Meilin cluster (Hegui Lou and Huaiyuan Lou)
Jiang 江	Shandong 山东	Gaobei cluster
Lin 林	Shanxi 山西	Hongkeng cluster
Huang 黄	Hubei 湖北	Tianluokeng cluster
Zhang 张	Hebei 河北	Hekeng cluster
Xu 徐	Shandong 山东	Chuxi cluster
Su 苏	Shanxi 陕西	Nanxi cluster

Source: Tasting Hakka Tulou, edited by Jiang (2011)

Photo 2: The Ancestral Hall in Tulou



Hidden in the mountainous areas of Fujian, tulou was once little known by the outside world. Its fame as a unique type of Hakka architecture was established as a result of the promotion by the government to be listed as a world heritage by UNESCO (United Nations of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). After a decade long application, Fujian tulou eventually achieved this recognition in 2008. The listing of tulou as World Heritage further enhanced its fame and attracted more tourists to visit the place. Application for World Heritage and the development of tourism led to the reshaping or refurbishing of the tulou and the surrounding areas. Since the listing, the daily use of tulou space by the residents was subject to regulatory control of the local governments. Tulou as a socio-cultural space embodied the intersection of the forces of internationalization, state, and local interests.

Chapter 2

Geographical Location of Tulou and Tulou Clusters

This research focused on the tulou in *Yongding* and *Nanjing* counties in the Southwest part of *Fujian* province. *Yongding* is about two hundreds kilometres away while *Nanjing* is about one hundred kilometre from *Xiamen*. Most tulou clusters listed in UNESCO Listing of Cultural Heritage are located in these two counties. As can be seen in the map, in the west are *Gaobei* tulou cluster, *Hongkeng* tulou cluster, *Nanxi* tulou cluster and *Chuxi* tulou cluster; and in the east are the *Tianluokeng* tulou cluster, *Taxia* tulou cluster. There are numerous individually standing tulou buildings, such as *Heguilou* (和贵楼), *Huaiyuanlou* (怀远楼) .

Gaobei tulou cluster has 48 tulou, of which 14 are circular-shaped and 34 are square-shaped tulou. The oldest tulou building in this cluster is *wuyunlou* (五云楼) , built between 1567-1572. It is in a dilapidated condition and most residents have moved out, leaving only three elderly people who refused to leave due to the emotional ties with this building. *Chengqilou* is called the “King of Tulou” as its architecture and structure are emblematic of Hakka tulou. Next to it is *Qiaofulou* (侨福楼) , which was recently built with remittances from overseas Chinese. Both *Chengqilou* and *Qiaofulou* are resided by Jiang lineage (Jiang, 2011).

Photo 3: *Chengqilou* within the *Gaobei* Tulou Cluster

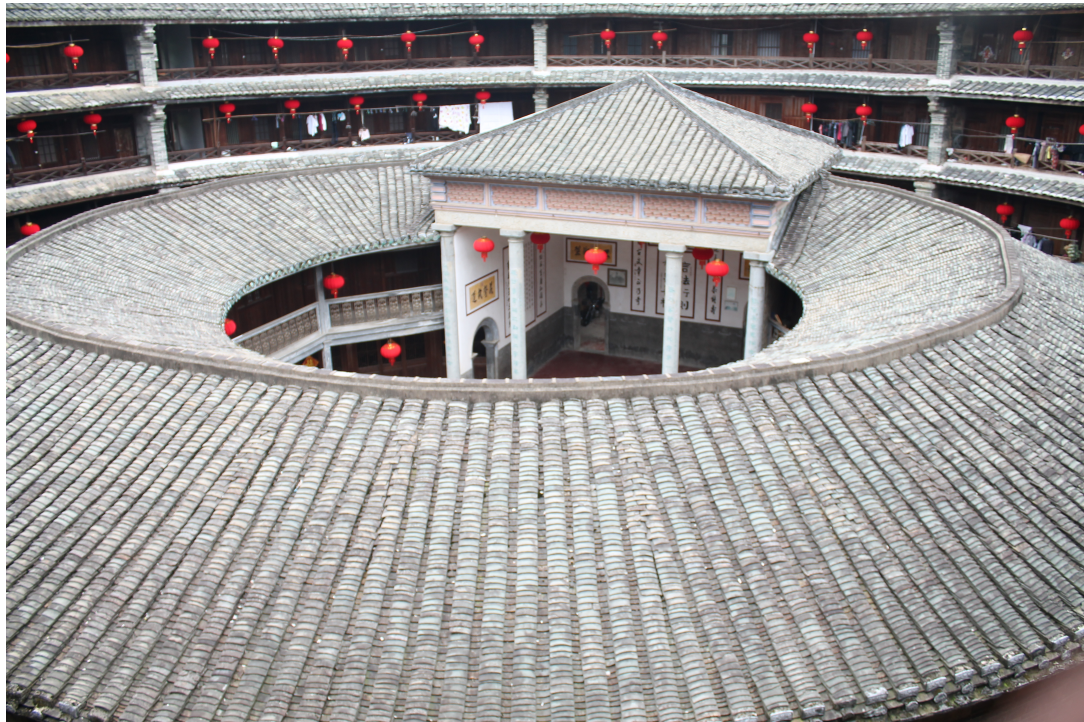


Photo 4: The Entrance of *Chengqilou*



Hongkeng tulou cluster is to the south of Gaobei cluster. It has a total of 46 buildings, comprising 13 tulou buildings constructed during the Ming Dynasty and 33 buildings constructed during the Qing Dynasty (Jiang, 2011). Tulou in this cluster have diversified configurations including square, rectangular, round, *wufeng* (五凤) and half- moon-shape. Within this cluster, there are also religious temples and halls such as Tianhou Palace and Lin Lineage ancestral hall. The most well-known tulou building in this cluster is *Zhenchenglou* (振成楼), called the “Prince of Tulou”. It has two layers, round in configuration with a grand ancestral hall in the inner layer. Western architectural influences could be identified in this ancestral hall. *Zhenchenglou* is also well-known for its fusion of Chinese and western architectural styles. Other important tulou in this cluster included *Kuijulou* (奎聚楼), *Fuyulou* (福裕楼) and *Rushenglou* (如升楼) .

Photo 5: *Zhenchenglou* with its Circular Roof



Chuxi tulou cluster is also located in *Yongding* county. It is to the South of *Hongkeng* cluster. This cluster has 5 round buildings and 10 square buildings. They were built against a hill with a flowing stream at the foot. Important tulou in this cluster included *Jiqinglou*(集庆楼), *Shanqinglou*(善庆楼), *Shengqinglou*(绳庆楼), *Gengqinglou*(庚庆楼) and *Gongqinglou*(共庆楼). The names of tulou in this cluster shared a Chinese character *qing* (庆), literally means celebration, which was to bless the lineage with a large group of descendants and prosperity of the lineage. Unlike other tulou buildings, all *Chuxi* tulou did not have wells within the tulou because residents used to drink stream water (Jiang, 2011).

Photo 6: *Shengqinglou* in *Chuxi* Tulou Cluster



Photo 7: The Square-shaped Tulou



Photo 8: A Bird-eye view of the Tulou Cluster



Tianluokeng Tulou cluster is in *Nanjing* County. It has one square tulou (*Buyunlou* 步云楼), three round tulou (*Hechanglou* 和昌楼, *Zhenchanglou* 振昌楼 and *Ruiyunlou* 瑞云楼) and one oval-shaped tulou (*Wenchanglou* 文昌楼). It is referred to by the local residents as “four dishes and one soup” (四菜一汤), a common phrase used for a dinner meal that was served to members of household on a daily basis. This cluster is situated in the picturesque mountainous area and is one of the most beautiful tulou clusters in *Nanjing*.

Photo 9: *Tianluokeng* Tulou Cluster



Chapter 3

The Vernacular Architectural Style of Tulou

Tulou was designed by Hakka and *minnan* people. It is a large, enclosed building with earthen walls and tiled roofs. The outer earthen walls reached out to 1.8 metre thick and constructed with compacted earth, stones, bamboos and other materials. The interior of tulou was constructed with wooden structure. Tulou are of round, square, trigram (wufeng), oval and half-moon shaped.

Photo 10: Wooden Structure of Tulou



The most common shapes of the tulou are round and square. Round tulou is circular in shape, which may have two or more layers. The largest tulou in *Yonding*, *Chengqilou*, had four layers. The outer layer was the main building with four storey used by residents as kitchen, sleeping room and storage. Rooms were distributed in the vertical line, that is, a unit was vertically composed of all rooms in each floor. In a

four storey tulou, each family would occupy four rooms, one on each floor and the room is one above the other. Rooms in the first and second floor were used as kitchen and storage with no windows opened to the outside. Rooms above the second floor were living rooms with windows opened for the purpose of good ventilation. It had a total of 72 rooms.

The second layer of *Chengqilou* was the reception place. Study rooms were located in the third layer and the inner layer housed the ancestral hall. The layout of *Chengqilou* was shaped according to the principle of *bagua* (八卦) and reflected the influence of *fengshui* (风水) on the lineage members during the construction of the tulou (Jiang, 2011).

Photo 11: The Layout of *Chengqilou*

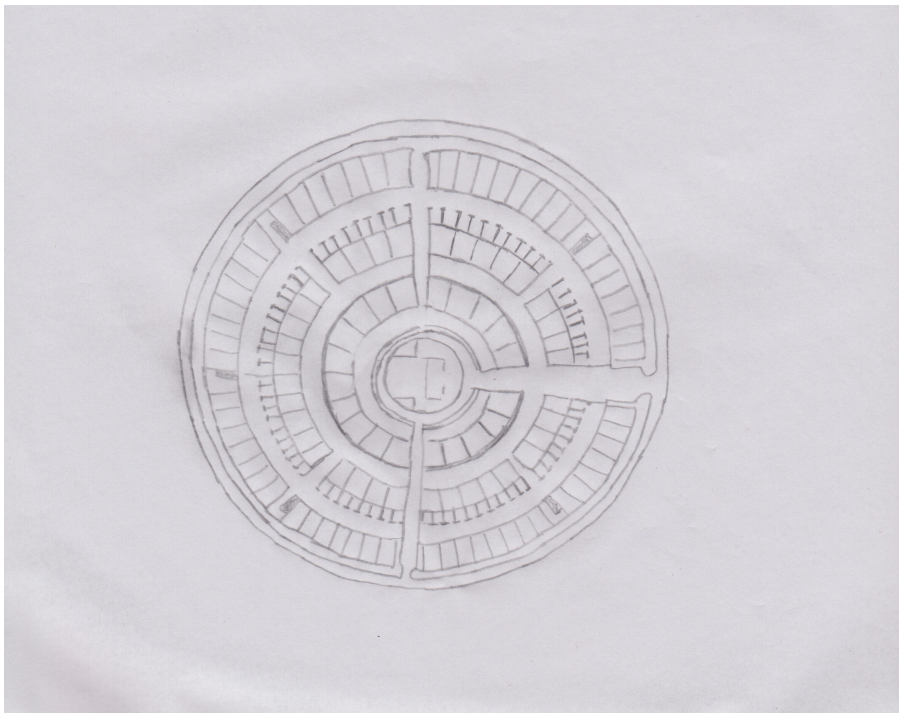


Photo 12: The Four Layers and Ancestral Hall of *Chengqilou*



Photo 13: The Ancestral Hall of *Chengqilou*



Photo 14: The Central (Reception) Hall in *Zhenchenglou*



Photo 15: Vertically Distributed Rooms in Tulou



Photo 16: Vertically Distributed Rooms in Tulou



Photo 17: Delicate Wood Carving Ceiling Beams



Square tulou in many ways is similar to round tulou, except that it is in square shaped. Similarly, it comprises a main building with an open courtyard in the centre. *Wufenglou* looks like an ancient palace or mansion with flying and overlapping eaves, which makes it look like a flying phoenix. Other types of tulou include concave, half-moon and *bagua* tulou.

Photo 18: Square Tulou



Photo 19: Half-moon Shaped Tulou



A clear central axis can be identified in tulou layout. Ancestral hall, main building and main entrance are located in the central axis. Based on this central axis, tulou has a symmetrical structure, which can be most clearly identified in the layout of square tulou. Corridors and stairs in the main building link all rooms together. The facilities in tulou include wells, either in open courtyard or in the kitchen of individual families, but usually not facilitated with toilets.

Another distinctive feature of tulou is the embodiment of the *fengshui* principle in the structure. Tulou sites are carefully selected according to the principle of *fengshui*, backing a hill and beside a stream that signifies harmony between natural environment and human settlement. *Chengqilou's* layout follows the *fengshui* principle of *wuxing* (五行), *jiugong* (九宫) and *bagua* (八卦). Another landmark, *Zhenchenglou* was also built according to the *fengshui* principle. It is located in the north, facing the South. The main building is tucked by mountains both on the left and right sides, which looks like a peacock spreading tail feathers. At its foot are a brook and a pond. It strictly conforms to the principle of “*zuoqinglong, youbaihu, qianzhuque, houxuanwu* (左青龙, 右白虎, 前朱雀, 后玄武) in *fengshui*, blessing wealth and propitious (Jiang, 2011).

Photo 20: A Brook at the Foot of Tulou in *Chuxi* Cluster



Chapter 4

Tulou and Its People: Lineage and Economy

Tulou encapsulated traditional Hakka and minnan culture. First, it embodied the Hakka agricultural tradition and moral ethics originating from the Central Plain. Peng argues buildings made of earth symbolize peasants' "natural" link with soil and Hakka people's inheritance of culture and lifestyle from the Central Plain (Peng, 1999). The enclosed, round or square, rammed earthen buildings resembled the once typical architectural style in the ancient *Yangshao* culture (仰韶文化) in Central Plain. Such type of building had long disappeared in the North, yet, it was revived in the South by Hakka people (Lin and Yong, 1992). In this sense, it symbolizes the cultural origin of Hakka people.

However, Hakka people's culture was not the mechanical reproduction of traditions and values from the Central Plain, but was the outcome of acculturation with local Han people (minnanren 闽南人) in the South. Thus, over time Hakka people have developed their own language, customs, traditions, Hakka identity and distinguished themselves from Han people in the Central Plain. *Yongding* was located in the coastal area of *Fujian* and maritime culture also shaped Hakka people's culture and economic tradition. Thus, we can observe that in addition to ancestral worship, Hakka people constructed *Tianhou* temple and worshipped this goddess.

Planting was usually difficult in mountainous areas and the barren land could not provide basic subsistence for the people and the Hakka people looked to the sea for economic activities. Since the Ming dynastic era, commerce and trade have penetrated into the Southwest coastal area and helped nurtured entrepreneurship among Hakka people. For the trading purpose, Hakka people planted tobacco crop in the *Yongding* region and the tobacco industry flourished. As a result, Hakka entrepreneurs emerged during that time and they became highly involved in trade and commerce. The

ancestors of *Hongkeng* people produced and traded tobacco knives, and in the heyday there were 15 such factories in *Hongkeng*. The famous *Zhenchenglou* and *Fuyulou* were both constructed by descendants of Lizaiting (林在亭), a Hakka entrepreneur building his wealth by producing and selling tobacco knives (Jiang, 2011).

Hakka people were also emigration pioneers. They migrated to find economic opportunities. With time passing by, many Hakka overseas Chinese have settled down in receiving countries, established families, reproduced the next generations and established *guanxi* network overseas based on kinship, regional affiliation or business association. Overseas Hakka people maintained their link with ancestral village. To them, tulou was their ancestral home and symbolized their cultural root in China; thus, they sent remittance to build and renovate their tulou. After the open door policy was implemented in 1978, more overseas Chinese have returned to *Yongding* to purchase properties and search their cultural root (Peng, 1999).

Despite of their cultural origin from the Central Plain, Hakka people have developed their own distinctive culture, tradition and identity that combined the traditions of agriculture, commerce and overseas migration experiences. Tulou is both a living space and a symbol of Hakka culture and tradition.

Photo 21: Couplets Revealing Moral Ethics



(a) Tulou and Lineage

Tulou reflected the lineage structure. As has been mentioned, each tulou was constructed and resided by a lineage of a surname group, that is, people with common ancestry. Ancestry defined the origin and identity of a lineage. Hakka people lost their genealogy and gradually forgot about their “real” ancestors during the long course of migration from the Central Plain that spanned several generations and moved thousands of kilometres away from their original home. However, this did not endanger the lineage identity of Hakka people. Ancestors could be the production of

collective imagination. Whether an ancestor is real or not is no longer important, what is significant is how a lineage constructs its ancestry. Thus, in this sense, lineage could be fictive kinship group. Peng examined the construction of ancestry in *Hongkeng*. The *Lin* lineage in *Hongkeng* traced their origin back to the Shang Dynasty based on <*Shiji Yinbenji*> (史记 殷本记). After the downfall of the Shang Dynasty, the descendants of *Bigan* (比干) were bestowed with the surname Lin. In the 37 generation, one branch led by *Wendegong's* (文德公) first son *Maoqing* (茂青) moved to *Yongding*, while his two sons *Qinde* (钦德) and *Qingde* (庆德) moved to *Hongkong* and established two sub-branches of the Lin lineage. Peng argued that such narrative of ancestors reflected both the real and imagined origin of the lineage (Peng, 1999).

An enclosed gated building represented the communal lifestyle of a lineage. Within the communal living, family as a social institution continued to play a significant role. Each family was entitled to a vertical section in tulou of 3 – 4 rooms with one room on each level. These rooms are of same size. According to Peng, such arrangement meant that each family within the lineage was entitled to equal spatial entitlement in lineage. A lineage constructed a Tulou in a location, but when lineage population expanded and the tulou could not provide sufficient living space, new tulou would be built to cater to the needs of an expanding lineage. Newly constructed tulou recorded the division of the original big extended lineage family (分家). Thus, in this sense, tulou recorded the development and increase of family branches and the change of lineage structure over time (Peng, 1999).

Within the tulou, there was hierarchical differentiation of the lineage based on seniority. An example is found in the *Wufenglou*. In this complex, the most grandiose hall was at the back portion of the tulou and used by senior members while younger generations occupied rooms on its left and right sides. The layout of *Wufenglou* reflected priorities in rank. In other tulou buildings, lineage hierarchy was not

reflected in the architectural design. Generally, residents socialized with each other on equal standings while seniors with knowledge and a sense of justice were elected as the head of tulou and conferred with certain authority (Xie, 1994).

Lineage also possessed common properties. For example, *Yijinglou* possessed common land (公田) that belonged to all lineage members. Common land was inherited from ancestors and couldnot be divided and distributed to individual families. Income from it belonged to the whole lineage within the tulou and was used for works and celebrations within it (Peng, 1999). Lineage within the tulou could thus be regarded as economic entities.

Nowadays, tulou has gradually lost its appeal to younger generations. Younger generations complained about its lack of modern facilities such as toilet and the lack of privacy when living in tulou. Many have chosen to move out of tulou once they have the economic resources to do so. However, tulou as the property of a lineage usually could not be sold to others. With the development of heritage tourism that brought tourists to tulou, part of the income from ticket sales was distributed to all lineage members who belonged to the tulou irrespective of gender and residency. As such those who have moved out were also entitled to a share of this income, generally called *fenhong* (分红). Our driver Jiang has moved out of *Chengqilou* and lived in a new building nearby but continued to receive a share of income from the ticket sale as a member of his tulou. In addition to the income derived from land, today tulou has become an important economic space and a source of revenue for the lineage members.

(b) *Tulou and Economic Activities*

In ancient time, the main economic activity of Hakka people was farming and they farmed the rice fields. During the Ming era, tobacco planting was imported into *Yongding* and became the backbone of the local economy during the Qing Dynasty

and Republican China (民国). The natural environment in *Yongding* was particularly favorable for planting and drying tobaccos. Hakka people soon mastered the skill of making good quality tobacco. During the Qing era, tobacco from Yongding was offered to emperors and traded overseas. The tobacco industry and commercial activities involving tobacco brought wealth to Hakka people. As mentioned earlier, *Hongkeng* Lin lineage carved a niche as the makers of tobacco knives and prospered because of this production. Various trading companies mushroomed and flourished in *Yongding* during that time. Wealth accumulated from tobacco plant and trade supported the construction of tulou at that time. Although tobacco was still planted in *Yongding* nowadays, the tobacco trade had been nationalized and wealth went to the governments.

In the late 1990s, Hakka people began to plant tea in *Yongding*. The climate and soil in *Yongding* are similar to that of famous tea planting county of *Anxi* (安溪). Planting, producing and trading teas have dramatically increased the average income of tulou people as the market price of tea is two or four times higher than that of rice (Yip, 2007). In *Yongding*, plots of tea field in the mountainous districts formed a distinctive landscape.

Photo 22: Terrace of Tea Fields



Photo 23: A Tea Shop in *Yongding*



Photo 24: Elderly Hakka Processing and Selling Tea Products



The development of tourist industry provided employment and another source of income for Hakka people, but also caused conflicts between tulou residents and local authority, a topic that will be developed in the following section.

Chapter 5

Tulou and Religion

The religious practices of Hakka people in *Yongding* reflected a combination of the Central Plain and *minnan* cultures. From the Central Plain, they brought the tradition of ancestral worship. Ancestral halls occupied the most eye-catching place in tulou or tulou cluster. There are two ways to arrange and build ancestral halls in *Yongding*. Confucian ideology dictates that human, ancestor spirit and deities should not live in one building. Thus in some tulou clusters, lineage halls were constructed separately from tulou. They were usually located in good geomantically aligned, *fengshui* site to provide protection and blessings to the lineage and the descendants. In *Hongkeng* tulou cluster, the ancestral hall of Lin lineage was built in the northern hill, facing southwest and overlooking the whole lineage (Peng and Wu, 2008).

However, many ancestral halls were built in tulou, usually in the central courtyard. In *Chengqilou*, the ancestral hall was in the inner layer, facing towards the main entrance. All rooms in *Chengqilou* faced towards the central ancestral hall. Such arrangement reflected the significance of ancestry in Hakka culture. During Spring and *Qingming* festivals, tulou residents participated in the communal ancestor worship. Qiu recorded the tradition in *Yanxianglou*, on New Year' eve, members took a shower, changed their clothing and carried chicken, fish, meat and dried fruits to the ancestral hall outside of tulou and presented the food offerings to their ancestors, after which, they invited their ancestors back to the tulou and worshipped them. For the following half a month, they worshipped their ancestors every morning and evening. During the *Qingming* festival, people carried various types of offerings to their ancestral tomb, bowed to ancestors and worshipped them. In daily life, when making important decisions, or during childbirth, scholarly examinations, career advancement or even before or after long distance travel, people burned incense sticks and asked for the blessing of ancestors (Qiu, 2001). Thus, ancestor worship was of critical

importance to the Hakka people. Although it is declining in importance today, the practice of ancestry worship could still be seen in the tulou.

Hakka people also worshipped the Goddess of Mercy, *Guanshiyin pusa* (观世音菩萨) and Earth God *Tudigong* (土地公). In *Yongding*, shrines with their statues can be found in the ancestral halls. Hakka people routinely provided offerings and burned incense sticks to ask for protection and blessing from them.

Photo 25: The “Three Dieties” Temple *Sandimiao*



Photo 26: The Three Dieties inside *Sandimiao*



Hakka people selectively incorporated various religious elements and worshipped the Heavenly Queen, Tianhou. Tianhou is also known as *Mazu* (妈祖), the indigenous goddess of the sea, who is believed to have the power to protect fisherman and sailors. Thus, *Mazu* worship is commonly practiced in coastal areas such as *Fujian* and *Guangdong* provinces. In *Fujian*, Peng and Wu argued that *Mazu* worship originated from the region of *Putian* in *Meizhou* island (莆田湄洲岛) (Peng and Wu, 2008). But it was modified to suit the needs in mountainous areas. For example, *Mazu* was believed to have the power to put down hill fire. Families would seek her for blessings during special occasions such as marriage, childbirth, bountiful harvest and poultry production. As argued by Xie, the perceived functions of *Mazu* was modified by the Hakka people to suit their land-based activities and mountainous living environment. (Xie, 1994).

Photo 27: Tianhou Temple



Influenced by minnan culture, Hakka people also worship *Baosheng dadi* (保生大帝). He is also called as *Dadaogong* (大道公) or *Wuzhenren* (吴真人). He was born in Minnan in the North Song Dynasty. He had remarkable medical skills and cured many villagers. After his death, he was deified by people in Minnan. Other local deities worshiped by Hakka people included *Liuhankougongwang* (刘汉口公王), *Guangjizhushi* (广济祖师) *Hexikougongwang* (合溪口公王), *Xikengkou minzhu gongwang* (西坑口民主公王), *Shihuikeng gongwang* (石灰坑公王), *Changtan gongwang* (长滩公王), *Wuhuangcunkou gongwang* (五黄村口公王), *Shiku gongwang* (石窟公王). The most widely worshipped local deity was *Baosheng dadi*. The ritual of *Zuodafu* (做大福) was held every three years for worshipping these local deities (Peng and wu, 2008).

There were also numerous lesser deities that were worshipped in smaller shrines scattered along to roads. These were the wayside shrines by the roads.

Photo 28: Wayside Shrine



Photo 29: Wayside Shrine



Photo 30: Wayside Shrine



(a) Zuodafu 做大福

Zuodafu is an important cultural and religious event of the Hakka people living in the tulou in *Yongding*. It has a long history. According to the narratives, during the Ming Dynasty, an unprecedented epidemic hit *Hukeng*. Five children danced to the *Maan* palace (马鞍宫) on the 15th day of the lunar ninth month and invited *Baosheng dadi* to save the villagers. Prior to this, villagers fasted for five days as a form of self-cleansing process. *Baosheng dadi* finally eliminated the plague and saved the village. The villagers performed a *Zuodafu* ritual in honour of *Baosheng dadi* after the plague was eliminated. This became a tradition in *Yongding* and was held every three years. In 2008, *Hukeng* held a large-scale communal *Zuodafu* and rituals were performed to ensure a good harvest or prosperous life². To the villagers, this was a religious as well as a cultural event.

²<http://www.ydtu.com/Detail/GeneralDetail.aspx?id=124&category=1> retrieved on June 10, 2012

Zuodafu was held from the 10th to 15th day in the ninth lunar month. A committee was formed to organize the event. Chief organizers were called as *toujia* (头家), who was selected by drawing lots. Funds were collected from members and donations from active participants and overseas Chinese. *Toujia* was responsible for raising extra funds if donations were inadequate to cover the cost. The unspent money would be used for tomb-sweeping, banquet and the next celebration. The requirement of *toujia* should be a person who was enthusiastic and earnest as he needed to fast for 5 days prior to the celebration to demonstrate his piety.³

Several days before the ceremony, a platform and canopy, called as *shenchang* (神厂) were erected. In an open ground, the platform and *shenchang* were placed on both ends and faced of each other. Offering tables were placed in the space between these two structures. On the first day, people dressed up and paraded to the temples of each village and invited the deities to the palace, then to the open ground, and placed their tablets on the table in the *shenchang*. The procession often extended as long as two to three miles and paraded along the village roads.

During the following days, people came to the *shenchang* to worship these deities and provided various kinds of offerings including rice, candy, fruits, tea and alcohol. On the other side of platform, invited opera troupe performed for villagers all day long. The ceremony reached its climax on the last day. During the morning of the final day, delegates from each branch of the lineage formed a procession to welcome *Baosheng dadi*. They carry banners, flags, beat drums and lit fire crackers all the way to the palace and invited this deity to *shenchang*. In *shenchang*, led by Taoist priests and chief worshipers, people bowed, presented offering and burned incense sticks to *Baosheng dadi*. After the recitation of the *biaozhang* (表章) by the Taoist priests, the

³http://amuseum.cdstm.cn/AMuseum/hakla/minjianxinyang/qitaxinyang_zdf.html retrieved on June 11, 2012

villagers burned incenses and lit fire crackers again. This concluded the ceremony.⁴

(b) *Daxinhun* Rite (打新婚)

The rite of *Daxinhun* has a history of more than five hundred years (Tu, 2011). In *Daxinhun*, the villagers worshipped the great grandma of the Lin lineage. She lived for over one hundred years and with her blessings, her lineage raised many high-rank officials. She was thus deified and worshiped by Lin lineage to ensure the fertility and family prosperity.

The rite was held during the lunar New Year in front of her tomb. Sheep and pig were offered to her as sacrifices. The chief participants of this rite were newlyweds of the previous year. Led by the first married man in the last year, all men kneeled to worship *linshi taipo* (林氏太婆). With the beating of a gong, an elderly man in a traditional gown and flanked by two strong men came out from the hall on the left. He was called the “drunken elder man” (*jiuzuigong* 酒醉公). With a red hammer at hand and guided by the two men, he recited “*zuosheng guizi, yousheng guizi*” (左生贵子, 右生贵子, means giving birth to sons) and hit the left and right shoulders of every newlywed young men. Some newlyweds were too shy to stay in the line. They were caught and pushed to the drunken elder. The ceremony was a joyous occasion with blessings to produce a coveted son. This was especially significant given the one child policy in Mainland China.

The rite of *Daxinhun* underwent some transformations in a changed social environment. Previously, the drunken elder only knocked newlywed men. With the general improvement of women’s status in lineage and society, nowadays women were allowed to participate into the ceremony and received blessings from the drunken elder. The recitals from drunken elder also changed to “*shengnan shengnv*

⁴http://amuseum.cdstm.cn/AMuseum/hakla/minjianxinyang/qitaxinyang_zdf.html retrieved on June 11, 2012

yi yang hao, zhi yao pei yao jiao yu hao” (生男生女一样好, 只要培养教育好, boys and girls are the same as long as they are cultivated and educated well), or “*you sheng you yu, hun yu xin feng*” (优生优育, 婚育新风 meaning superior birth and superior nurture, new wave in marriage and childrearing). This reflected the impact of the political propaganda of the central government on the issue of childbirth (Tu, 2011).

Chapter 6

Tulou as a World Heritage Site

In 2008, Fujian Tulou was listed by UNESCO as the world cultural heritage. The heritage cultural site consisted of 46 tulou from six tulou clusters and four isolated buildings in *Nanjing*, *Yongding* and *Huaan* counties. Application was initiated and led by the local governments and the whole process from preparation to application and the successful listing lasted almost a decade. In 1998, *Yongding* county first established Hakka Tulou Cultural Heritage Application Committee. In 2000, *Fujian* provincial government became involved in the project and adopted a strategy of combining the tulou buildings from three counties and presented them as “Fujian Tulou”. This *Fujian* Tulou was submitted to the accreditation as world cultural heritage. In the following years, the *Fujian* provincial government established a two-tier system to regulate the preservation of tulou and carried out renovation programmes based on the criteria set by UNESCO.

The *Fujian* provincial and municipal governments provided guidelines and supervision on the conservation of tulou, while the county governments were in charge of the conservation works. They were in direct contact with the local residents and were engaged in the management of tulou. A Tulou Management Committee was established. In 1999, the Yongding Tulou Tourism Management Committee was established while the Nanjing Tulou Management Committee was established in 2007. A management group was set up to manage the important tulou heritage buildings such as *Chengqilou*, *Zhenchenglou*, *Fuyulou*, *Kuijulou*, *Yanxianglou*, *Zhenfulou*, *Yongkanglou* and *Huanji Lou*.⁵ There was also the formulation and implementation of conservation law and regulations to regulate the daily usage of these tulou by the villagers.

⁵http://www.fjtl.gov.cn/tlyj/200807/t20080727_47486.htm retrieved on June 6, 2012.

In 2006, *Fujian* government implemented the Conservation and Management Law for “Fujian Tulou” Cultural Heritage. The conservation of tulou became legalized with the implementation of the People’s Republic of China Law on the Protection of Cultural Relics (中华人民共和国文物保护法).

UNESCO defines the integrity of cultural heritage as not only intactness of tulou building but also intactness of its surrounding farmed and forested landscape. To conform to the standards set by UNESCO, the provincial and municipal governments demolished modern buildings that were not part of the tulou style and farmed landscape. In the 1990s, modern buildings made of concrete were built in *Yongding* as tulou no longer appealed to the young generations. These gray or white colored buildings in modern style were considered as destroying the integrity of tulou landscape. According to Yip, the officials originally planned to demolish all such modern buildings and relocated residents. The lack of necessary resources and funds meant that some of these buildings were kept, but they were renovated by putting on a layer of mud on the walls and the roofs were covered with red tiles so as to conform to the general landscape. Besides, telephone poles and above ground electrical wires were torn down and buried underground (Yip, 2007).

Photo 31: Earthen Wall of Tulou



Photo 32: A Signage showing the Need to Protect Tulou



According to the conservation regulation, there would be a buffer zone between the tulou sites and the surrounding districts, new buildings could be built within the buffer zone but the height, layout, scale, materials and colour should be in harmony

with tulou and the surrounding landscape. Walls and roofs of new buildings should not be constructed with tiles. Government approval would be required for new buildings. Because of this, it became extremely difficult to build new houses. According to one resident, only those with good relationship with local officials could build new houses. And even so, there would be a risk that their new houses might be demolished when higher-level government officials that inspected the region and disapproved of it. Within the core and buffer zones, mining, woodcutting and other activities threatening the tulou landscape would also be prohibited.

Photo 33: Tulou versus New Buildings



Tulou buildings were renovated based on the principle of “maintaining original look and repairing the old as old”. In core zone and buffer zone, 46 tulou buildings were partially or completely renovated. Local residents were not allowed to erect electrical wire or communication facility in tulou. Marking, staining or painting the

wall of tulou was strictly prohibited.⁶ Conservation funds were included in county government's financial budget. Special protection funds were raised from government and donations from society and overseas Chinese. Since 2000, around a hundred million RMB were spent on tulou conservation and preservation (Jiang, 2011).

As a result of these efforts in tulou conservation, UNESCO approved of its conservation actions. In its website, it commented that:

“The legal protection of the nominated areas and their buffer zones are adequate. The overall management system for the property is adequate, involving both government administrative bodies and local communities, although plans for the sustainability of the landscape that respect local farming and forestry traditions need to be better developed.”⁷

However, the preservation of tulou in alignment with the UNESCO framework conflicted with the interests of local residents. Our driver Jiang said “we earn money to build a house and move out of tulou.” With the restriction to build on the land around tulou, it created problems for villagers with expanding family size. As a result, some were forced to move out of their villages (Yip, 2007).

Further, as a result of the flourishing tea industry in this area, some tulou residents transformed the spare rooms on the third and fourth floor for tea processing and storage. These rooms are installed with air-conditioners which violated the conservation regulation. The government demanded the removal of the air conditioners and prohibited the enlargement of the tea workshops outside of the tulou (Yip, 2007). All these caused resentments among the local residents with tensions rising. Without careful treatment, such tensions could erupt into protest movements and caused social unrests.

⁶<http://www.fj-tulou.org/tlbfread.aspx?id=512009221161017250> retrieved on June 4, 2012

⁷<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1113> retrieved on June 3, 2012

Chapter 7

Tulou and Tourist Development

The development of tulou heritage tourism gathered momentum after the Chinese government's application for it to be listed as a cultural heritage with UNESCO. Prior to this application, few people were aware of tulou and even fewer travelled to *Yongding* and *Nanjing* for sightseeing. Tulou, hidden in the mountainous areas of *Fujian*, were secluded from the general public. It is the local governments that initiated and promoted tulou as a heritage brand and helped develop the tourist industry in the late 1990s. *Yongding* County was the first to plan and develop tourism. Other counties such as *Nanjing* soon followed its step. So far, among counties with tulou, *Yongding* was best known to the tourists and travellers. It was only from 2008 that the tulou heritage site experienced an influx of mass tourists after it was listed as cultural heritage in the UNESCO listing. Thus the official recognition from UNESCO became the best advertisement for tulou heritage tourism.

In 2011, *Yongding* received 3.43 million tourists and earned the total revenue of 2.3 billion RMB.⁸ According to *Yongding* statistical office, majority of them were domestic tourists, while foreign tourists accounted for only 3.8%. Among domestic tourists, those from *Fujian* province accounted for the majority. In a survey done by Liang and Yuan, Fujian tourists accounted for 79.1% (Liang and Yuan, 2011), probably as a result of massive advertisement within *Fujian* province.

⁸<http://tjj.fjyd.gov.cn/tjj/tjgb/20120410155413.html> retrieved on June 2, 2012

Photo 34: The Arrival of Mass Tourists to the Tulou at Noon



Tulou and the Management of Tourist Industry

Tulou buildings were scattered in Southwest *Fujian* and belonged to the jurisdiction of different counties. The county governments of *Yongding*, *Nanjing* and *Huaan* were responsible for the management of the tulou and tourist development. Each county government administered its own tulou and competed with other counties for tourists. The county governments marketed their tulou through an advertising campaign. In *Yongding*, the advertising slogan is “Fujian Tulou Hakka Yongding (福建土楼客家永定)” while *Nanjing*’s slogan is “Fujian Tulou Native Place Nanjing(福建土楼，故里南靖)”. As these counties relied on tulou to attract tourists, competition was intense. At the same time, there was also cooperation among them. In 2010, Fujian Tourism Bureau and Fujian Tulou Tourism Development Alliance were established in *Fuzhou*. *Yongding*, *Nanjing* and *Huaan* counties joined the Alliance subsequently. This alliance served to unify the promotion of tulou brand, establish tulou website, collectively release information, lay out tourism service standard and compile the guidance introduction (Liang and Yuan, 2011). However, all

these measures had not been put into practice by 2002. Thus, so far, it is still the individual county governments that manage and promote tulou tourism.

Despite that each county government developed tourist industry in their own way, the model they adopted was quite similar. Before developing tourism, tulou were owned and managed primarily by local residents. But now, they are managed by Tulou Management Committee or tourist development companies. In *Yongding*, the state-owned enterprise Fujian Hakka Tulou Tourist Development Company Limited (福建省客家土楼旅游发展有限公司) managed *Gaobei*, *Chuxi*, *Hongkeng* Tulou clusters and *Zhongguchun* village. Tulou were still owned by local residents, but this company possessed the right of management. Local residents were required to sign a contract with it, rent out their tulou for tourist visit and obtain a share of ticket revenue as compensation. Local residents did not have the right to collect ticket from tourists, but they could run their own small business within tulou (Guan, Liao, Qi, 2008) .

In *Nanjing Tianluokeng* tulou cluster, under the protest of local residents, the right to management was once conferred to tulou members. In 2004, local resident *Huang Zhihua* obtained this right and managed this tulou cluster for two years. In 2006 when the contract came to the end, the local government refused to adopt this measure and gave the right of management to a tourist development company. In *Nanjing*, Fujian Tulou Tourist Development Company Limited (福建土楼旅游开发有限公司) was established. It was affiliated to Nanjing Tulou Management Committee and was the chief agent to develop and manage *Tianluokeng*, *Hekeng* tulou clusters, *Heguilou* and *Huaiyuanlou*. Likewise, local residents needed to sign a contract with this company and rented out their tulou to it.

During the development of tourist industry, serious conflicts arose between tulou residents on the one hand and tour companies and county government on the other. To

manage tulou as a tourist attraction and maintain order, tourist companies routinely disciplined the use of tulou by local residents. Peddlers and hawkers could only sell their tea, local products and handicrafts within a confined area, for example, in front of their doors, but not elsewhere. The strict regulation created resentments of local residents towards the tour companies and local government. In 2011, an elderly woman peddler sold rice pastries in front of the main entrance of *Chengqilou* and was forcibly expelled by the security guard hired by the tour company. This triggered a mass protest in *Chengqilou*. The tour company was forced to close the main entrance of *Chengqilou* and prevented tourists from entering this tulou on that day. In *Hongkeng* tulou cluster, a local resident was severely beaten by security guards hired by the tour company when he peddled his products around the tulou. This incident again led to massive protest from the local residents.⁹

Photo 35: A Signage Extolling the Observation of Rules within the Scenic District



⁹<http://focus.hotelpropertychina.com/Shtml/2011088/20110808101035.shtml> retrieved on June 3, 2012

To build infrastructure for tourist development, the local government converted agricultural land to road, reception centres and hotels and jeopardized the livelihood of some tulou residents. Although these residents received some monetary compensation, they lost one reliable source of income. Local residents had expected to benefit substantially from heritage tourism, but the current mode of management could not provide them more benefits. The rent of tulou was low. According to a report, *Chengqilou* was rented to a tour company for 90,000 RMB each year. The contract was signed in 2009 with a twenty year lease. A rent review after the third year yielded a rent increase of 10 percent. The rent of *Chengqilou* was among the highest. Many tulou were rented to tour companies at a rate of 10,000 to 30,000 RMB per year. This revenue would be divided and given to all tulou residents as income from rent. Each resident only received a very small sum of money yearly. Jiang reported that in 2011, he received about 500 RMB from the rent. In some tulou, residents received less than 100 RMB.¹⁰

There were also conflicts revolving around the distribution of ticket revenue. In *Tianluokeng*, led by several active elder members, tulou residents demanded a higher rent rate or more shares of ticket revenue from the government. In 2008, *Tianluokeng* tulou residents demanded that they wanted 40 percent of ticket revenue, but the government only agreed to give them 20 percent. To protest against this, local residents sold entry tickets directly to the tourists and threatened to close the entrance of their tulou if they were not allowed to do so. This action was suppressed by the local government and several activists were arrested due to their roles in organizing the protest.¹¹

¹⁰<http://focus.hotelpropertychina.com/Shtml/2011088/20110808101035.shtml> retrieved on June 3, 2012

¹¹http://news.qq.com/a/20090414/001045_2.htm retrieved on June 3, 2012

Impact of Tourist Development on Tulou

Tourist development has changed local people's pattern of livelihood and led to the commercialization of tulou. It became a common practice for tulou residents to open a stall in front of their door to sell souvenirs, tea, fruit, tobacco or other local specialties to the tourists. People with more resources operated hotels, restaurants or provided transport services for the tourists. Some tulou buildings were converted into hotels and equipped with television, telephone, air-conditioner, toilet and wifi. *Changli* hotel was located within *Fuyulou*. *Yuanlouyuan* hotel is a two-storey tulou, rented by a couple and converted into a modern hotel. In tulou, some owners converted their rooms into guest rooms and posted their phone number on the door for tourists to contact them if they wished to spend a night to experience the “authentic” tulou as the villagers continued to live in it.

Photo 36: *Zhenyanglou* – A Converted Tulou-style hotel



Photo 37: Interior of *Zhenyanglou*-Tulou Hotel



Photo 38: Two Hotels Located within a Tulou (one on the right and one on the left)



Photo 39: Selling Souvenirs inside the Tulou



Photo 40: Women Selling Souvenirs and Local Specialties inside the Tulou



Photo 41: Wrapping and Selling Tobacco outside Tulou



Tourist development also transformed the perception of tulou in the eyes of local villagers. Before the arrival of tourism, tulou was viewed as a building inherited from ancestors with no special economic values. But now they were viewed as an economic resource through which they could earn a livelihood and share in the revenue derived from the tourist trade.

According to the survey done by Lin, majority of residents (78 percent) viewed heritage tourism positively as it helped to preserve and develop local tradition and culture (Lin, 2007). They also regarded the intrusion of tourists into their living quarters as part of economic transaction where a trip to view their room might yield them several yuan. For example, to go up to the top floor to view the famous circular roof, one is required to pay 10 RMB. Thus, these villagers were willing to entertain tourists and became a target of the tourist gaze for a small income, something that they took in good strife.

The influx of mass tourists did affect their routine life. During national holidays, tens of thousands of tourists flooded to the tulou and blocked up the entrance. It was reported that during the Labor Day national holiday, visiting tourists in *Chenggilou* blocked the local residents out and it took them half an hour to enter into their home.

Photo 42: Local Entertainment among the Villagers – Playing Cards in the Central Courtyard of the Tulou



Photo 43: Village Women Doing their Daily Chores



Photo 44: Village Women Preparing a Meal in the Kitchen on the Ground Floor



Photo 45: Tourists Admiring the Tulou



Photo 46: A tourist Chatting with Tulou Residents



According to Lin, tourist development has also affected the social relationship in tulou and widened the social gap. Previously, local residents were close to each other. During busy season, they exchanged labour with each other and during slack season, they gossiped and chatted together. The presence of mass tourism changed this relationship as more tulou residents became involved in the tourist industry and were to act as tourist guide to earn extra income. This led to decreased interactions among the local residents. Furthermore, some become entrepreneurs by operating restaurants and hotels that left them with little time for social interaction with their tulou neighbours (Lin, 2007).

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Tulou as A Multifaceted Space

According to Mateju and Vecernik, space reflected a dialectical relationship with social organization. Space acquired meanings in the process of development and it reflected the constructive characteristic of social structure (Mateju and Vecernik, 1981). Tulou reflected and embodied the intersection of 3 different forces namely UNESCO which is an internationalization force, the Chinese state and the local residents. International institution and organization such as UNESCO universalized the definition of cultural heritage by setting up a world heritage list and the criteria of inscription. It thus dictated the remaking and refurbishing of heritage space according to its prescribed guidelines and standards. As such, the politics of inscription drove the local campaign of cultural internationalization. This was initiated and mediated by the forces of governmental state at various levels. Thus, UNESCO furnished Chinese government with new knowledge, technique and meaning of space to remake cultural landscapes into world heritage.

Since China joined the World Heritage Convention in 1985, the government has been keen to enlist its traditions and cultural landscapes to UNESCO as part of its push for economic development and identity politics. UNESCO accreditation became a key to develop a tourist economy (Ryan, Zhang, Deng, 2011). Yet, to be enlisted, the government needed to follow the UNESCO's definition of cultural heritage and conserve and reconstruct the local site to measure up to its criteria. As a result, new buildings were demolished in core and buffer zones, electrical wires and telephone poles were buried underground, tulou buildings were renovated to its original form, and local residents' daily use of tulou was regulated. In this campaign, the government also imposed specific cultural meanings on tulou, which demonstrated both local cultural uniqueness and national pride. Tulou was promoted not only as an emblem of communal living and characteristic of a unique Hakka culture, but also an integral part of Chinese culture. Cultural uniqueness of tulou was exploited to gain

UNESCO's recognition and attract tourists, and at the same time, it has to be integrated into the broad framework of Chinese culture to evoke national pride and consolidate Chinese nationalism.

UNESCO accreditation and tourist development reshaped the local residents' perception and use of tulou. First, tulou is still their living space, but now their daily use of tulou space has been subjected to the regulation of the tour company and the local governments. Second, tulou is the symbolic space bearing Hakka identity. Tulou has been officially recognized as an emblem of the unique Hakka culture and hence it has reinforced the Hakka local identity. Third, tulou has become an economic space that generates several types of incomes for the residents. The influx of mass tourists has brought new economic opportunities and means of livelihood. They became tour guides, petty traders, entrepreneurs, restaurant owners, hotel operators and transport providers. Tulou could also be used by local residents as a protest space and used as a leverage to get a better share of income from the tourist trade. Closing the entrance of tulou was a way to protest against local authorities and unfair treatment. Thus, tulou as a space has multiple meanings to local residents.

Tulous is also a tourist space today. Tourists came to see not only the building of tulou, but also local people's daily life. The intrusion of the tourists into the tulou residential space has created a different set of relationship between the tourists and the local residents. On the one hand, there is the tourist gaze where the local residents and their daily routines were being gazed at. On the other, the tourists were seen as "god of fortune" bringing them the much needed cash for the individual family and the lineage as a whole.

Tulou could be conceptualized as not only a physical place, but a multifaceted space – economic on one front, social on the other, cultural on the third front, tourist on the fourth and heritage on the fifth by understanding the meanings attached to each of these spaces and the interaction of these multiple spaces and its relationship to the local residents, local and national governments, local people and the tourists. In the

final analysis, tulou as a multifaceted space reflected the intersection of universal internationalism, state and nationalism and diverse localism.

Questions:

1. What is tangible and intangible heritage of tulou?
2. What are the economic, social and cultural capitals of tulou?
3. What are the roles played by the government in the conservation of tulou?
4. Does tourist development contribute to the preservation of tulou and Hakka culture? Why and why not?
5. What are the consequences of commercialization of tulou?
6. How can you understand tulou as a multifaceted space?

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